Internet Explorer May Prompt You for a Password

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Summary

Passing your user name and password to an Internet Information Services (IIS) Web server is the responsibility of the Web browser. The following scenarios describe the relationship between Internet Explorer and IIS in regards to authentication.

More Information

NOTE: Windows Integrated authentication, Windows NT Challenge/Response (NTCR), and Windows NT LAN Manager (NTLM) are the same and are used synonymously throughout this article.

- Internet Explorer prompts for a password when you are using Windows Integrated authentication (Microsoft Windows NT Challenge/Response).

  The following conditions must be met for Internet Explorer to automatically authenticate a user's logon and password and maintain security:
  - Windows Integrated authentication, also known as Windows NT Challenge/Response, must be enabled in the Web site properties in IIS. Anonymous authentication is attempted first, followed by Windows Integrated authentication, Digest authentication (if applicable), and finally Basic (clear text) authentication.
  - Both the client and the Web server must be either in the same Microsoft Windows NT-based or Microsoft Windows 2000-based domain or in trusted Windows NT-based or Windows 2000-based domains in which the user's account can be granted permissions to resources on the IIS-based computer.
  - The user's browser must be Internet Explorer. Internet Explorer is the only browser that supports Windows Integrated authentication (NTCR).

  - Internet Explorer must consider the requested URL to be on the intranet (local). If the computer name portion of the requested URL contains periods (such as http://www.microsoft.com and http://10.0.0.1), Internet Explorer assumes that the requested address exists on the Internet and does not pass any credentials automatically. Addresses without periods (such as http://webserver) are considered to be on the intranet (local); Internet Explorer passes credentials automatically. The only exception is addresses included in the Intranet zone in Internet Explorer.
  - Internet Explorer's Intranet zone security setting must be set to **Automatic logon only in Intranet zone**. This is the default setting for Internet Explorer 5.
  - The user requesting the Web page must have appropriate file system (NTFS) permissions to the Web page as well as all of the objects

referenced in the Web page. For example, a user may have Full Control rights to a Web page, but is prompted for a password if the Web page refers to graphics that are in a secure folder.

- Internet Explorer prompts for a password when you are using Basic (clear text) authentication or Digest authentication.

  Internet Explorer does not pass your user name and password automatically when you are using Basic (clear text) authentication or Digest authentication. Therefore, you are always prompted for credentials when you are using these authentication methods.

- Internet Explorer prompts for a password when you are using anonymous authentication.

  Anonymous authentication never prompts you for a password because IIS already knows the user name and password of the anonymous account. You are prompted for a password because Internet Explorer has been forced to use an authentication method other than anonymous. This occurs because the anonymous user account (IUSR_computername by default) did not gain access to one or more of the following items:
    o The requested file or Web page
    o Any of the requested objects embedded in the file or Web page (for example, images)
    o The ISAPI extensions associated with the requested file or web page (for example, and .shtml file)